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LB 305

AM2080. It's to the main bill...Standing Committee amendments, which are the bill. It strikes everything in the bill as you now know it, including striding the sales tax...striking the sales tax, and it does two things, practically speaking. It allows the rate of growth for schools only to go to half of the amount...I don't have my sheet that I wanted. To...it allows, instead of the 3 percent allowed in LB 305, this allows 1.5 percent growth instead. And it does allow for a growth in the reserve for school districts. The idea behind the second part, allowing the growth in the reserve of school districts, some have quite a bit, some have very little, some have a hard time reacting to changes in our school aid formula across the state. By allowing some more growth in this reserve they can manage, I believe, better through periods of stress and tension when they don't have the funds or they're uncertain of the funds or when their population changes and that kind of thing. So I understand the Education Committee has talked about that, so it's not a new idea. I'm hopeful that Senator Raikes might enlarge upon that in terms of detail. But my amendment, in particular, the original...the first part is allowing some growth in school districts, not to the extent that was originally allowed in...or proposed in LB 305. It's my contention that, as I have said just a few minutes ago, that this is a local issue, by and large, and it's different across the state. In fact, I felt that there's no way we can solve the problem uniformly across the state considering the vast diversity in our different school districts. But if school districts do have a problem, there's going to be some way that they can approach this. They will have some flexibility in using the money. In most cases, 91 percent of the school districts across the state, have access to some money that they can...they could spend if they had the authority to spend it on the budget lid. This amendment does not speak at all to the levy limitation. That is still in place, so they will not be able to raise their levy or to gain more money under that proposal. They will only be able to spend...this only expands the levy limit...budget lid, excuse me, budget lid, I don't want to get that confused, to the extent that they would have that money to spend. It isn't the whole solution to the problem, I understand the Governor is opposed to the sales tax and he's opposed to this, but it is an answer to...a partial answer to